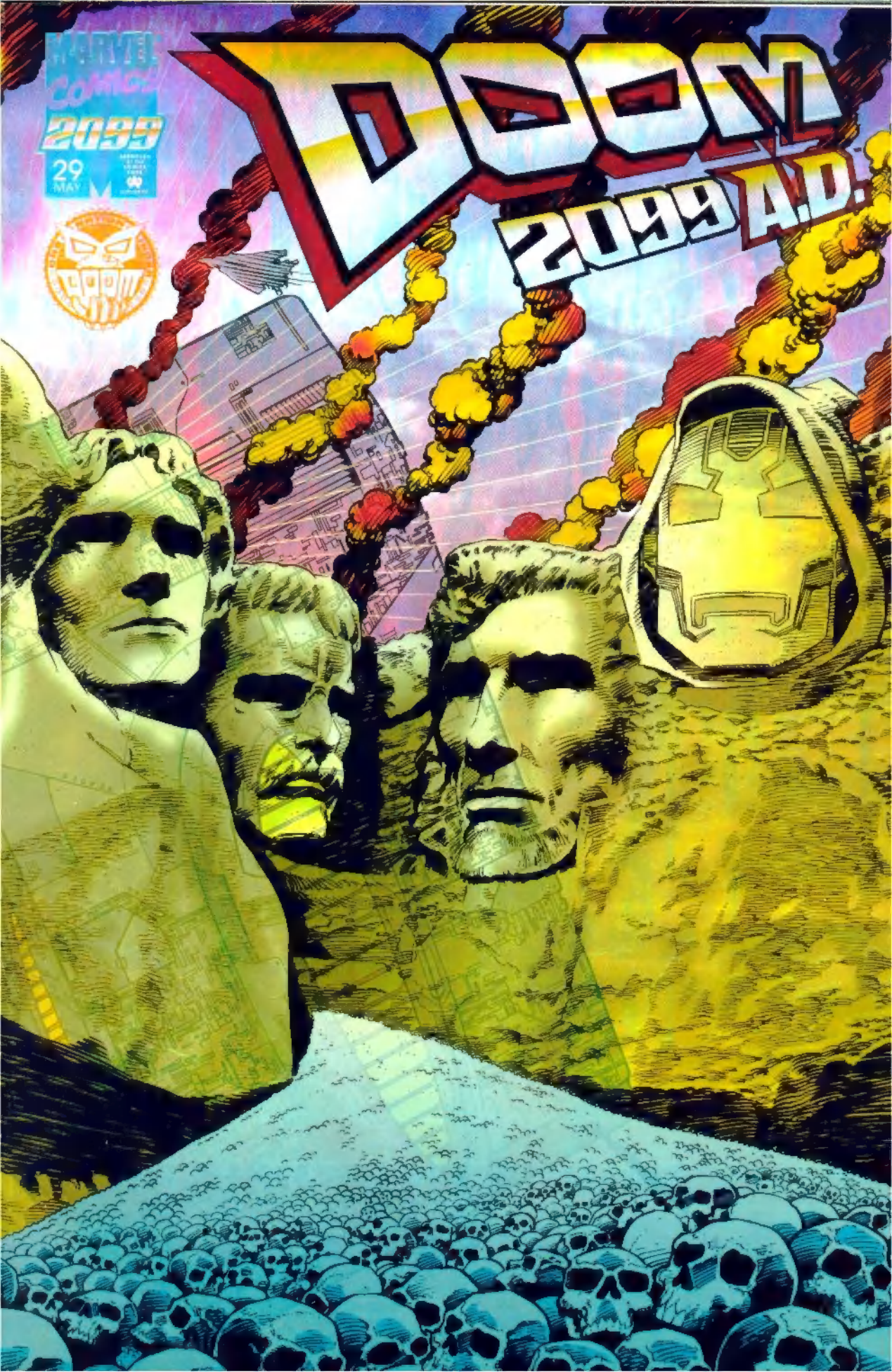
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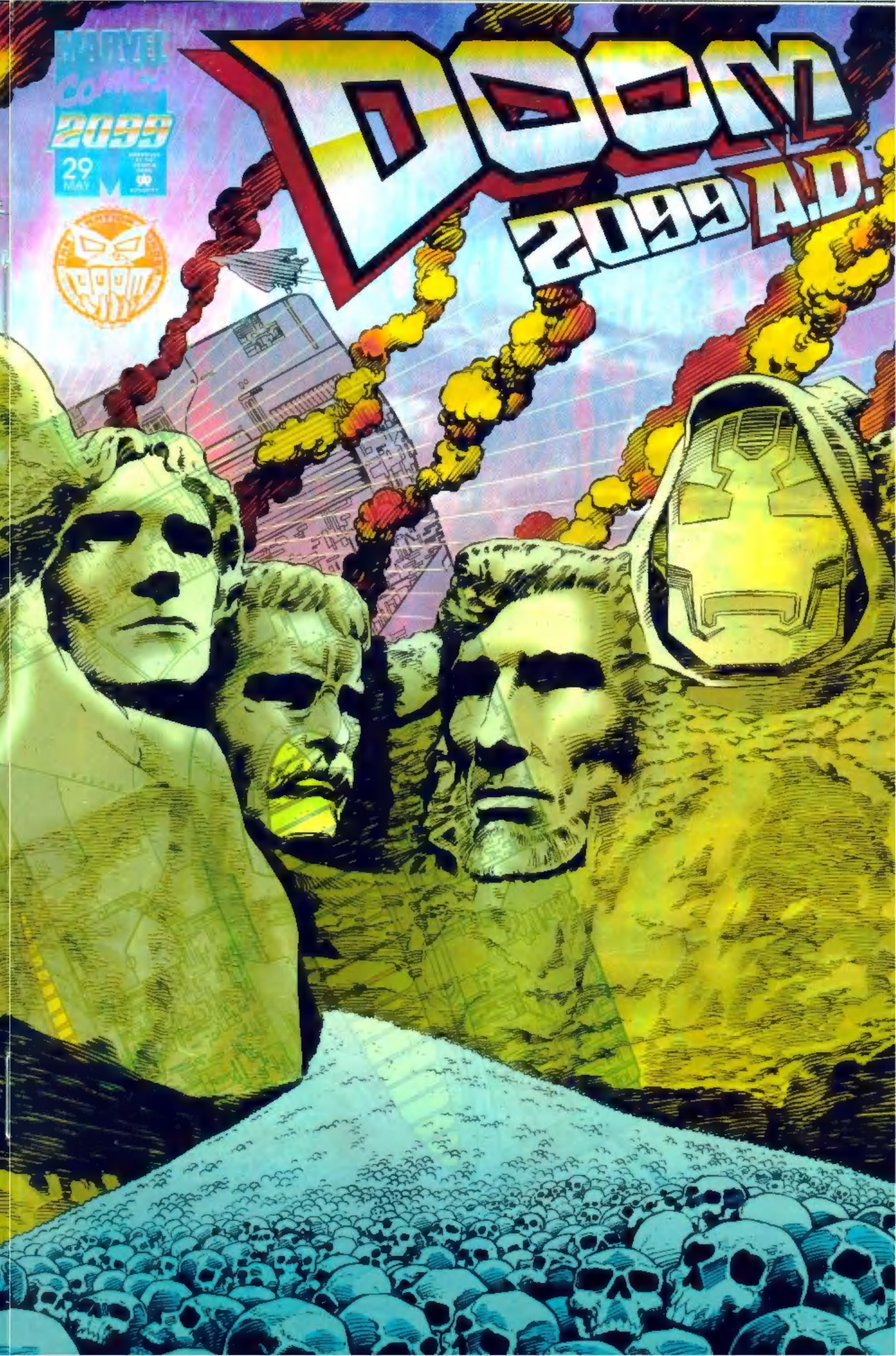

AMERICAN AESAR

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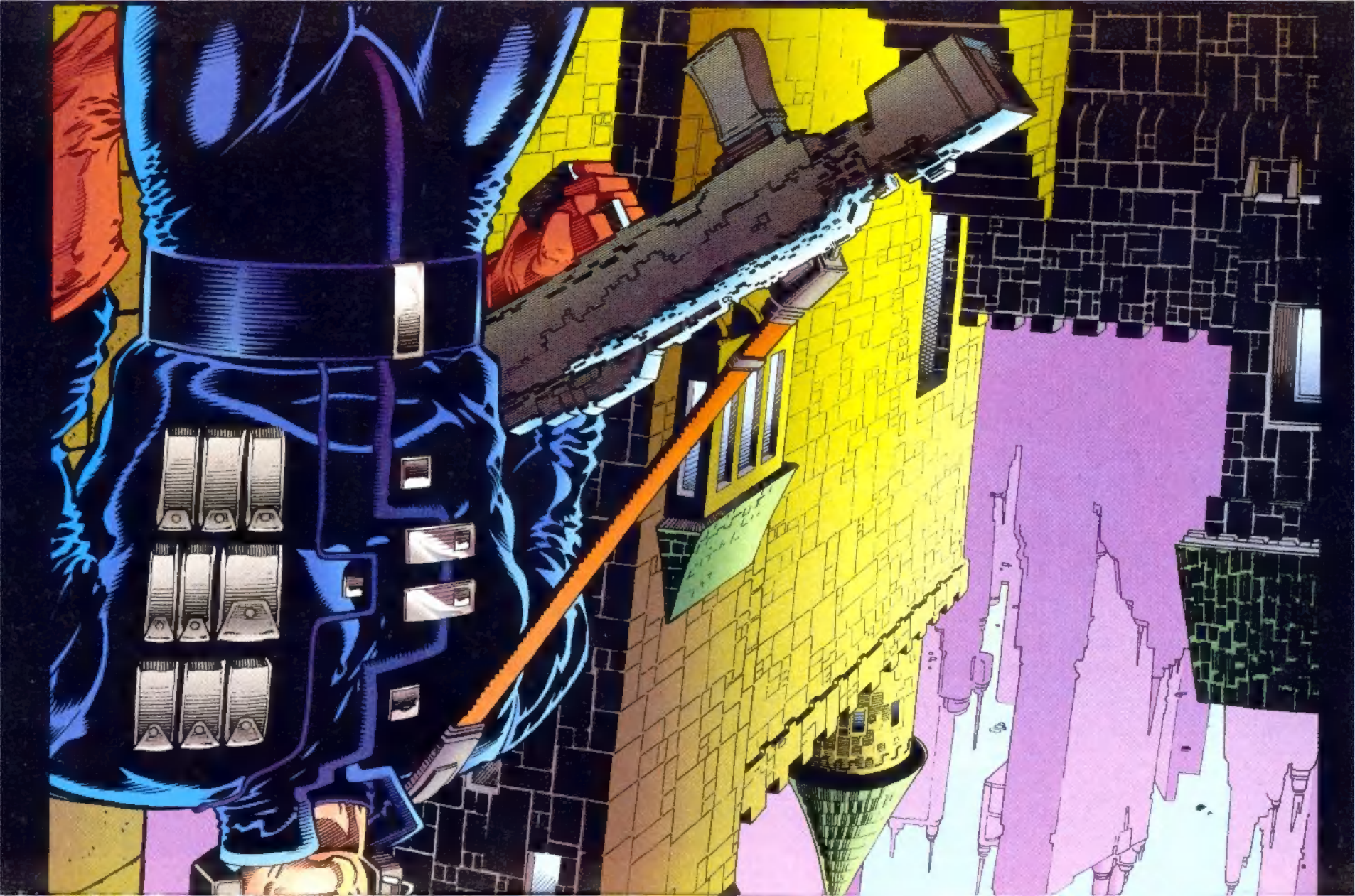
FROM, DOOM TO ALL MINISTERS AND AIDES
RE. BACKGROUND TO THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD
THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY IS A VESTIGIAL ORGAN. PRESIDENT ACTS AS ARBITRATOR IN DISPUTES BETWEEN THE MEGACORPS THAT TRULY RULE AMERICA.
"PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS" ARE MERELY CIRCUSES DISGUISING THE INVESTITURE OF ONE SYMPATHETIC TO CERTAIN BUSINESS INTERESTS.
HOWEVER; PRESIDENTIAL POWERS WERE NEVER REPEALED. THEY SIMPLY BECAME UNNECESSARY AND HAVE BEEN IGNORED.

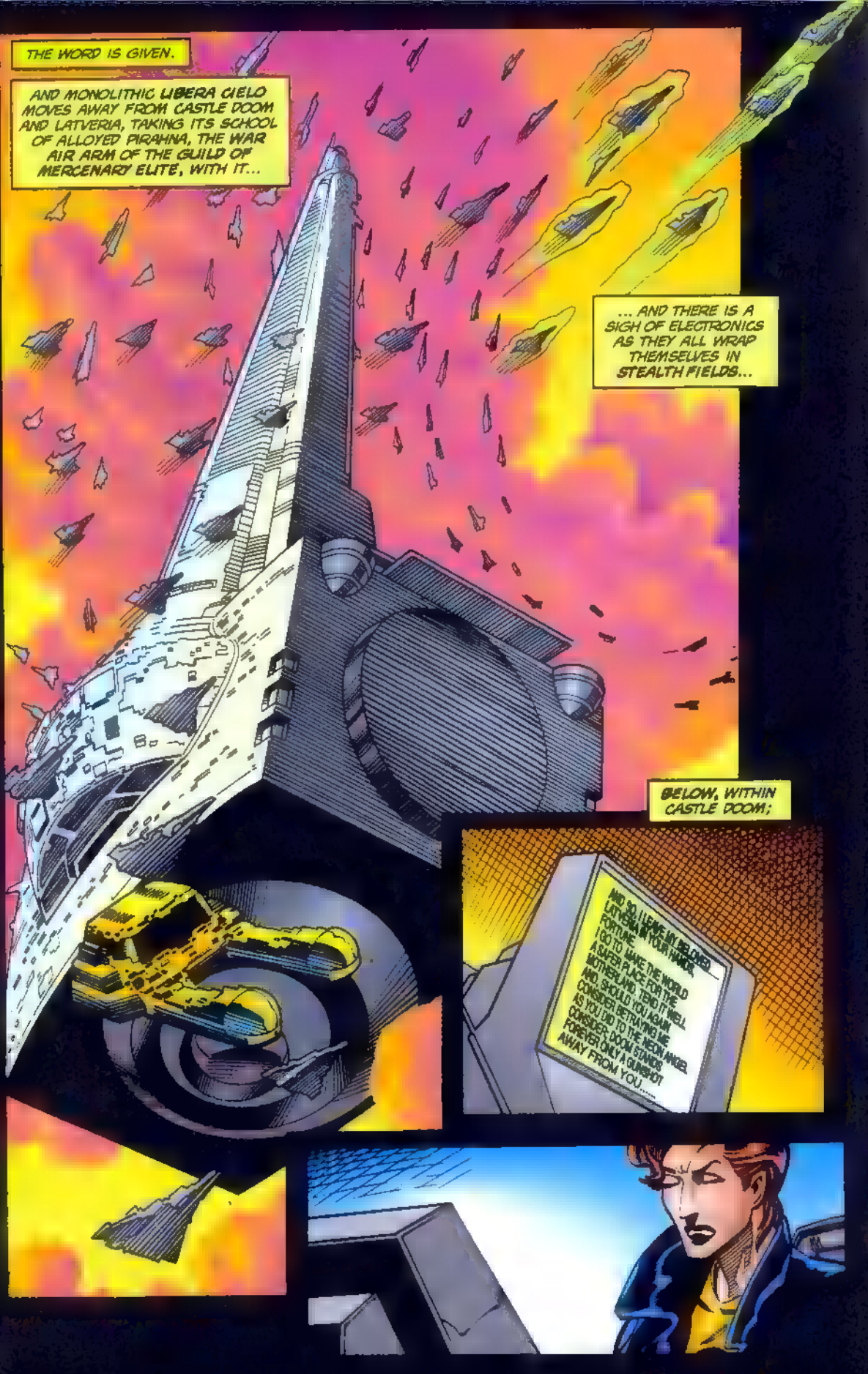


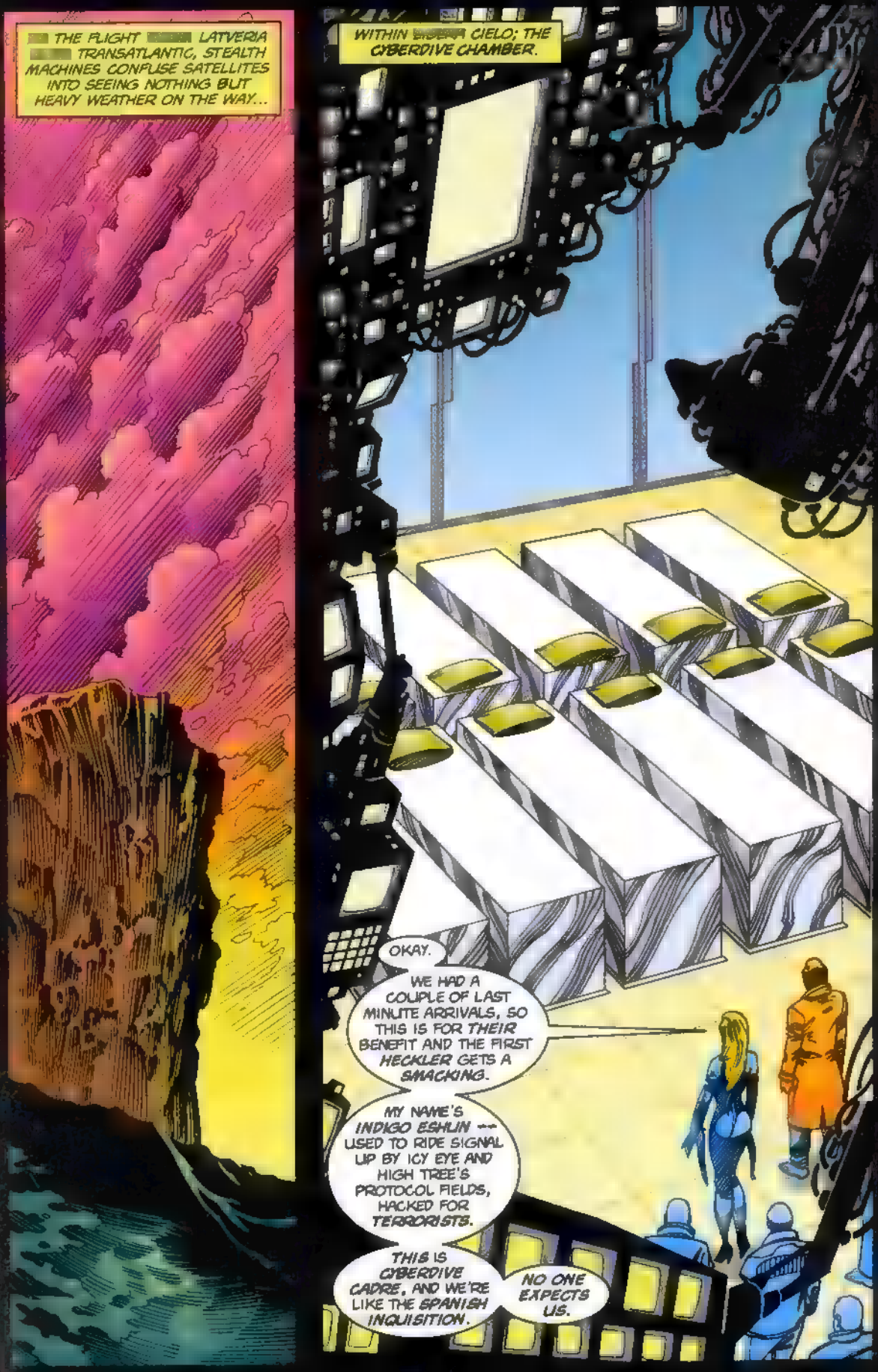
OUR TASK IS TO ENTER AMERICA, CUT OFF THE SENATE, TAKE OVER THE WHITE HOUSE AND REPOWER THE PRESIDENCY--
-- INVESTING MYSELF AS THE PRESIDENT OF WHAT REMAINS OF THOSE UNITED STATES.

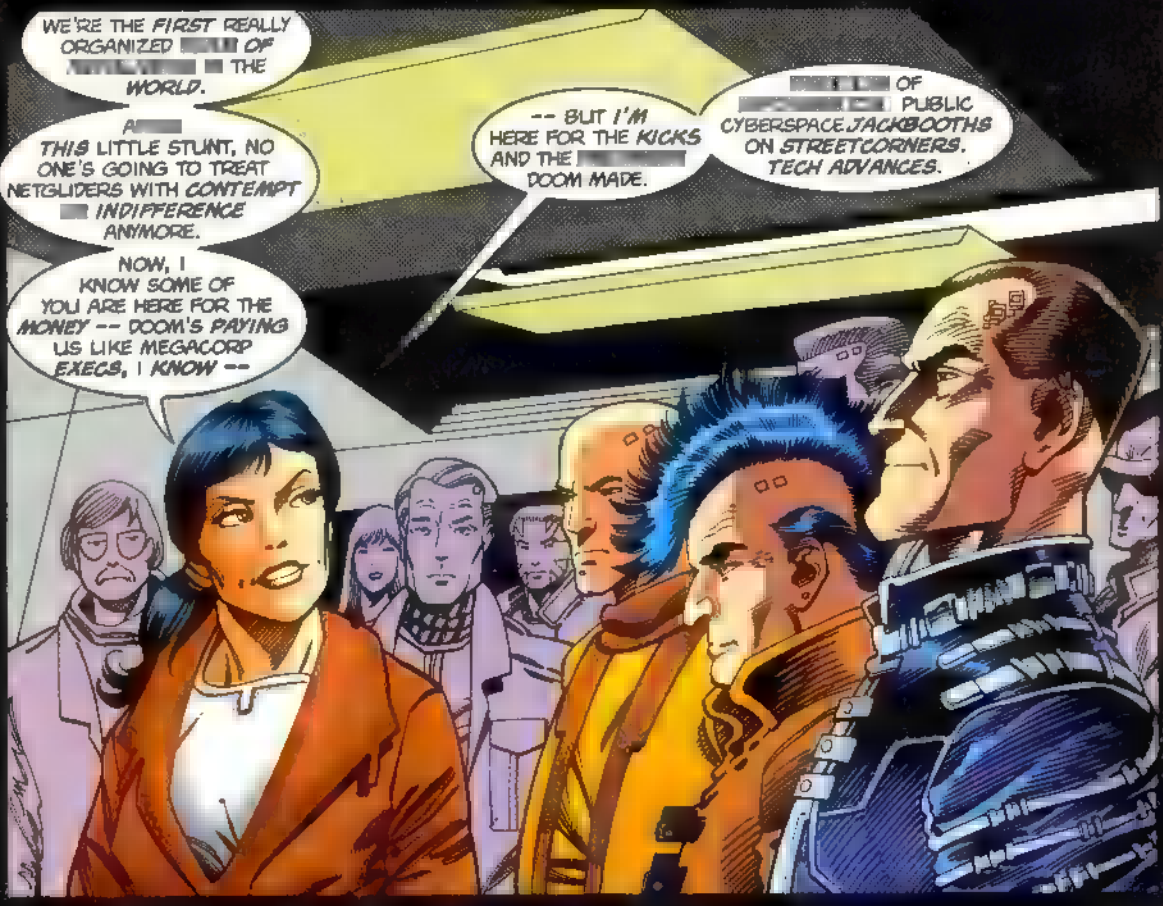
END TRANSMISSION.
SHARP BLUE -- IT IS SOMEWHAT DISCONCERTING TO SEE A PROFESSIONAL WARRIOR LOOKING SO PENSIVE.
THINKING IS WHAT'S LET ME SURVIVE LONG ENOUGH TO BECOME PROFESSIONAL.
YOU KNOW, MY ANCESTORS WERE FIGHTERS. BUT THEY ONLY EVER FOUGHT FOR CAUSES. FOR HONOR, IF YOU LIKE.
I BECAME A GUILD OF ELITE MERCENARY BECAUSE I THOUGHT THERE WERE NO MORE "CAUSES" NOT INVOLVING MONEY.
I BECOME LIKE THE WORLD.
AND NOW, HERE I AM... AND I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME AN HONEST CAUSE.

AND IF YOU TELL ANYONE I SAID ANY OF THAT, I'LL BOIL YOU IN YOUR ARMOR.
MY LIPS ARE SEALED. NOW, PLEASE REGARD THE WORLD-BOARD--
-- AS I ILLUSTRATE THE WILD CARDS IN OUR LITTLE GAME.
SUPER-HUMAN ADVENTURERS. YES.
THESE ARE PERSONS, FOR THE MOST PART, WITH INFERIOR ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT.
THEY MAY INTERFERE. THEY MAY IRRITATE. I KNOW ONLY THAT THEIR ACTIONS WILL BE RANDOM AND UNINTELLIGENT.

THE EPIDEMIC OF THE SUPERHUMAN SELF-RIGHTEOUS INCREASES EXPONENTIALLY.
WE SHOULD NOT DISCOUNT THOSE EXAMPLES OUTSIDE AMERICA, SUCH AS THE VAMPIRIC LACHRYMA, OR THE REVENANT SOLDIER CHERNOBYL.
EVEN THE EMERGING MYSTICS, LIKE THAT RECKLESS IDIOT METALSCREAM, MUST BE SCRUTINIZED.
CONVEY [redacted] CONCERNS TO YOUR [redacted] -- ANY OF [redacted] CREATURES MAY POSE A THREAT TO THEM DURING OUR WORK.
FOR A COLD [redacted] WITH IMPERIALIST TENDENCIES, THAT SOUNDED A LOT LIKE YOU CARE.
I AM A REVOLUTIONARY, SHARP BLUE. I HAVE [redacted] IF YOU TELL [redacted] I SAID THAT...
...[redacted] NOW. THE WORD IS GIVEN.


THE WORD IS GIVEN.
AND MONOLITHIC LIBERA CIELO MOVES AWAY FROM CASTLE DOOM AND LATVERIA, TAKING ITS SCHOOL OF ALLOYED PIRAHNA, THE WAR AIR ARM OF THE GUILD OF MERCENARY ELITE, WITH IT...
... AND THERE IS A SIGH OF ELECTRONICS AS THEY ALL WRAP THEMSELVES IN STEALTH FIELDS...
BELOW, WITHIN CASTLE DOOM;
AND SO, I LEAVE MY BELOVED LATVERIA IN YOUR HANDS, FORTUNE. I GO TO MAKE THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE FOR THE MOTHERLAND. TEND IT WELL. AND, SHOULD YOU AGAIN CONSIDER BETRAYING ME AS YOU DID TO THE NEON ANGEL, CONSIDER: DOOM STANDS FOREVER ONLY A GUNSHOT AWAY FROM YOU.....

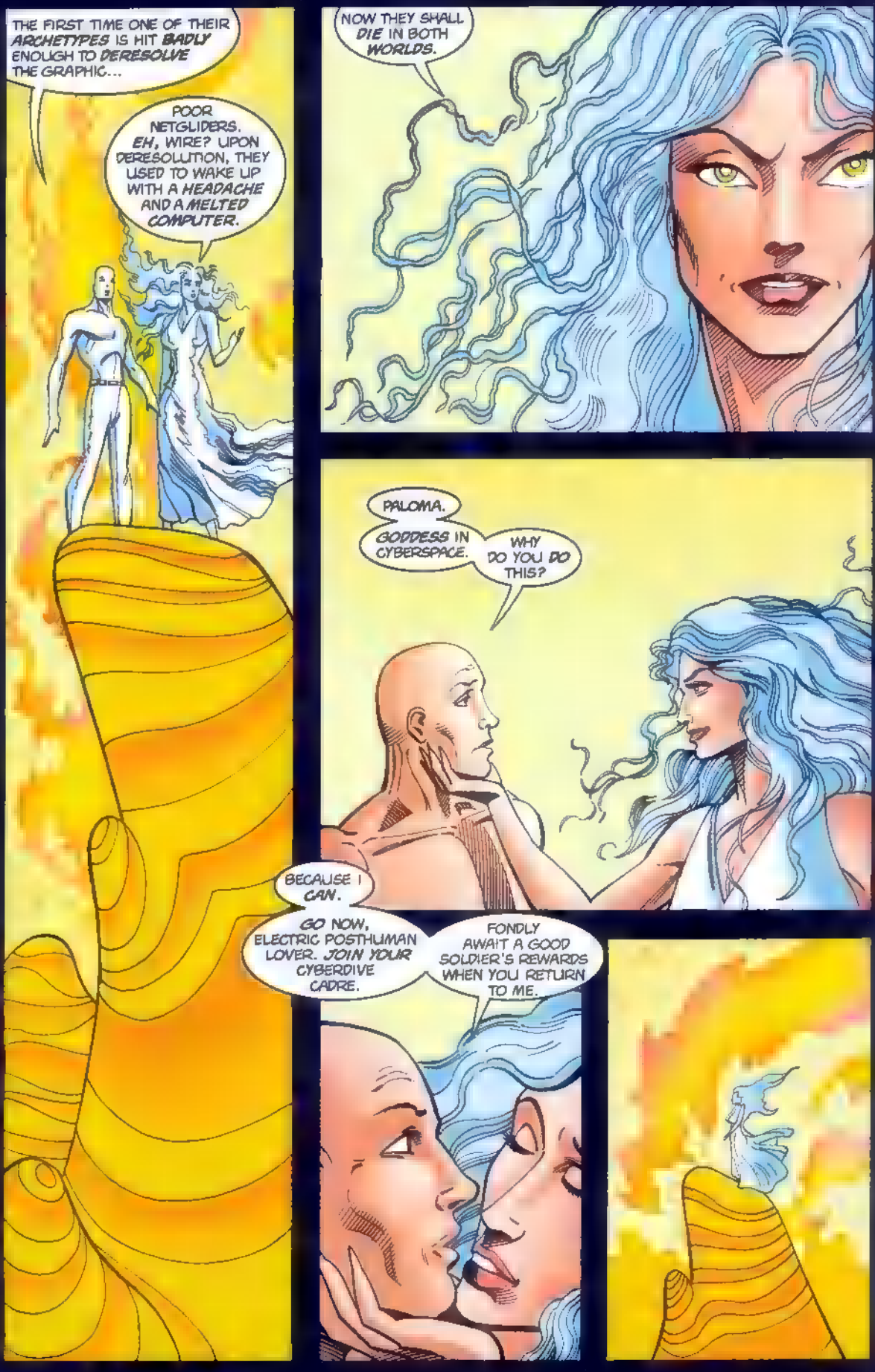

THE FLIGHT [redacted] LATVERIA [redacted] TRANSATLANTIC, STEALTH MACHINES CONFUSE SATELLITES INTO SEEING NOTHING BUT HEAVY WEATHER ON THE WAY...
WITHIN [redacted] CIELO; THE CYBERDIVE CHAMBER.
OKAY.
WE HAD A COUPLE OF LAST MINUTE ARRIVALS, SO THIS IS FOR THEIR BENEFIT AND THE FIRST HECKLER GETS A SMACKING.
MY NAME'S INDIGO ESHUN -- USED TO RIDE SIGNAL UP BY ICY EYE AND HIGH TREE'S PROTOCOL FIELDS, HACKED FOR TERRORISTS.
THIS IS CYBERDIVE CADRE, AND WE'RE LIKE THE SPANISH INQUISITION.
NO ONE EXPECTS US.


WE'RE THE FIRST REALLY ORGANIZED [redacted] OF [redacted] THE WORLD.
A[redacted] THIS LITTLE STUNT, NO ONE'S GOING TO TREAT NETGLIDERS WITH CONTEMPT [redacted] INDIFFERENCE ANYMORE.
NOW, I KNOW SOME OF YOU ARE HERE FOR THE MONEY -- DOOM'S PAYING US LIKE MEGACORP EXECS, I KNOW --
-- BUT I'M HERE FOR THE KICKS AND THE [redacted] DOOM MADE.
[redacted] OF [redacted] PUBLIC CYBERSPACE JACKBOOTHS ON STREETCORNERS. TECH ADVANCES.

I'M HERE FOR THE FUTURE.
END OF SERMON. LET'S GET SOME NET UNDER OUR FEET.

SMOKE ME A KIPPER, CAT ME DEARIE -- I'LL BE BACK FOR BREAKFAST.
YEAH, RIGHT BACK AFTER THESE MESSAGES...
CYBERDRIVE CADRE, LAUNCH PROTOCOLS LODGED, RUNNING.

INDIGO ESHUN I MINISTER OF SIGNAL I LOGGED W/ CENTRAL COMM.
DIVE DIVE DIVE
MINDS UNZIP INTO THE ELECTRONIC WORLD, RECLOTHED IN COMPUTER-GRAPHIC ARCHETYPES...
... PLUNGING THROUGH SIGNAL TOWARDS AMERICAN NET AND THE VOLTAGE WAR THAT AWAITS...
SO THOSE ARE DOOM'S NETGLIDERS. HA. I CAN SEE WHY THE GREAT AND GOOD OF THE 20TH CENTURY WERE SO TERRIFIED OF HIM.
DO THEY KNOW OF THE CHANGES I HAVE WROUGHT UPON THE NET'S OPERATING ENVIRON-MENT?
NOT AS YET. BUT THEY WILL.

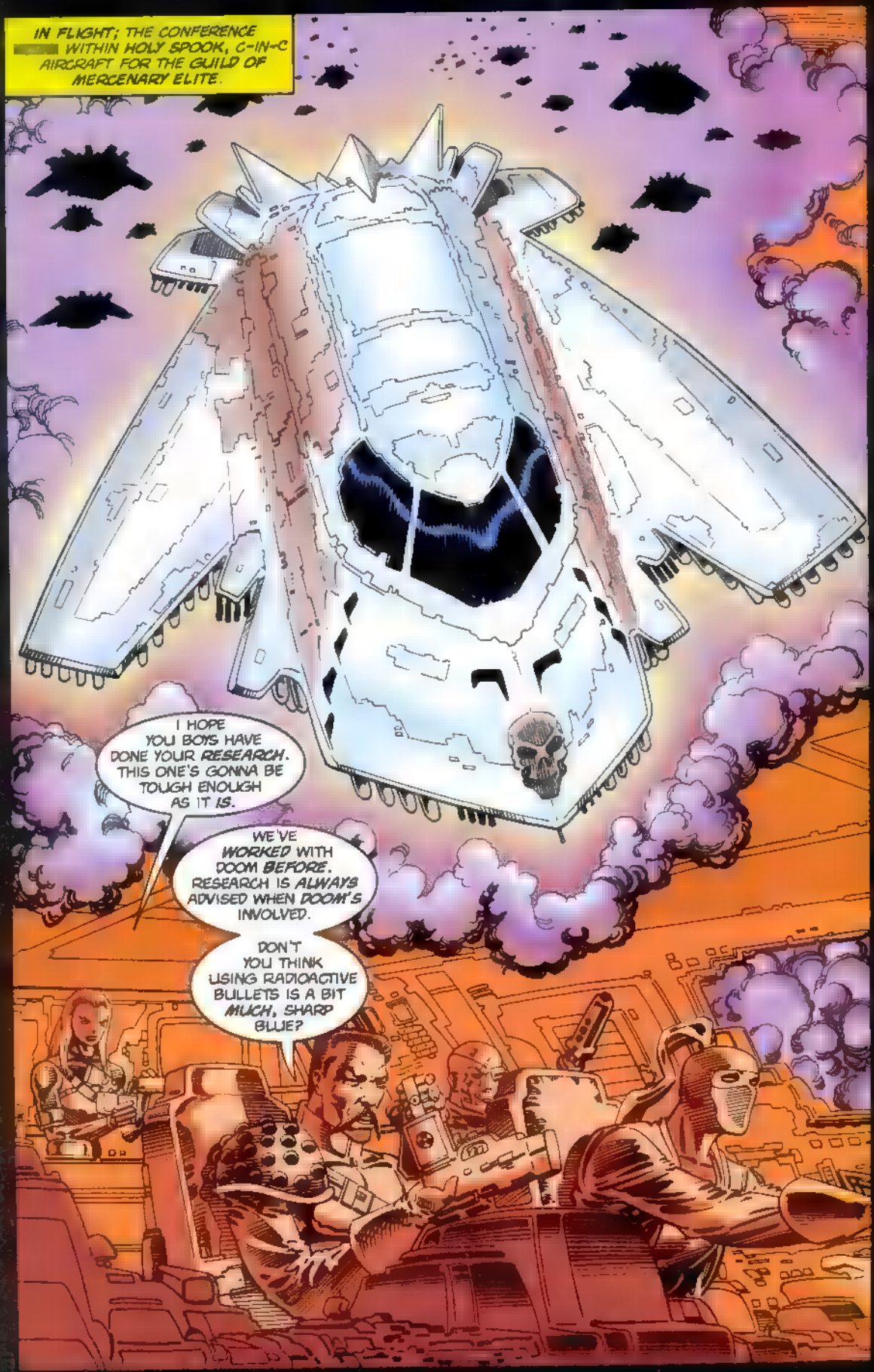

THE FIRST TIME ONE OF THEIR ARCHETYPES IS HIT BADLY ENOUGH TO DERESOLVE THE GRAPHIC...
POOR NETGLIDERS. EH, WIRE? UPON DERESOLUTION, THEY USED TO WAKE UP WITH A HEADACHE AND A MELTED COMPUTER.
NOW THEY SHALL DIE IN BOTH WORLDS.
PALOMA.
GODDESS IN CYBERSPACE.
WHY DO YOU DO THIS?
BECAUSE I CAN.
GO NOW, ELECTRIC POSTHUMAN LOVER. JOIN YOUR CYBERDIVE CADRE.
FONDLY AWAIT A GOOD SOLDIER'S REWARDS WHEN YOU RETURN TO ME.

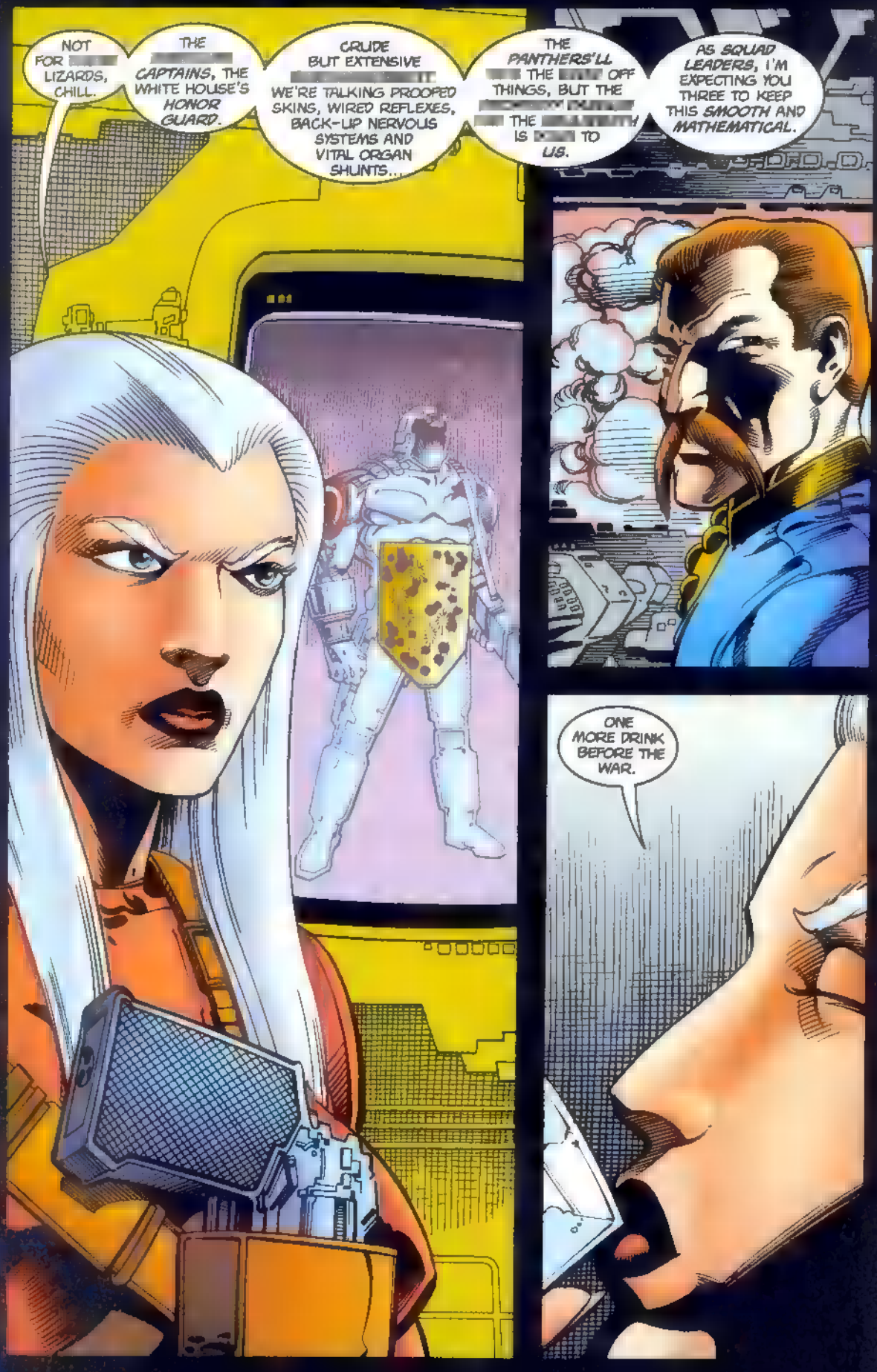
LIBERA CIELO: OBSERVATION DECK.
CHARLIE DON'T SURF
I HAVE LEFT PALOMA... BEEP IN THE NET... I'M WITH THAT ESHUN SLAG AND THE CADRE NON, RERIGGING COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS...
DOES HE ALWAYS JABBER LIKE A LONELY SPEED-FREAK?

[redacted] ENJOYS A [redacted] EXISTENCE; HIS MIND IS BOTH WITH US, [redacted] RANGING INDEPENDENTLY IN CYBERSPACE.
THEREFORE, [redacted] IS ALLOWED.
ARE YOU ALWAYS SO MOROSE, MORPHINE SOMERS?
I'M A MUTANT. I'M ALLOWED.
WE'VE TIED UP AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS, DOOM. [redacted] ASKS IF YOU'LL WANT TO CONTACT ANYONE STATESIDE ONCE IT'S [redacted]
[redacted] EXCELLENT [redacted] YES; ONE JACOB GALLOWS, ATTACHED TO THE PUBLIC [redacted]
I REQUIRE A MINISTER OF PUNISHMENT.

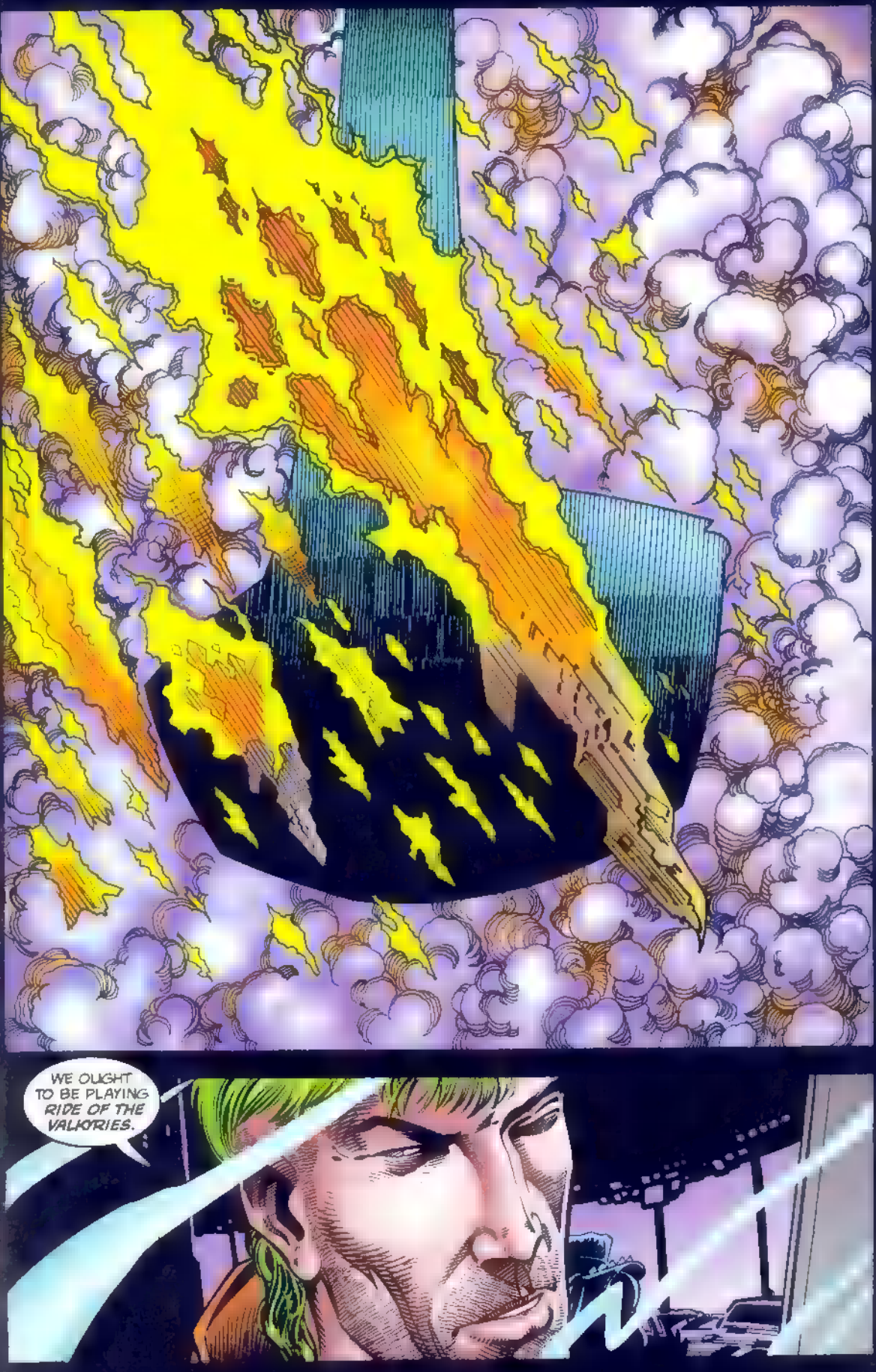
IN FLIGHT; THE STRIKE VEHICLE OF THE PANTHER'S RAGE, HEADED BY COMMANDER / MINISTER OF ENEMY RELATIONS NKRUMAH.
BE ADVISED, MY BEAUTIFUL KILLERS -- THE FORTHCOMING MURDER IS A MATTER OF REPUTATION. NOT HONOR.
THERE IS A DIFFERENCE. THERE IS NOTHING REGAL ABOUT THIS WORK.
WE ARE BEING EMPLOYED AS GODS AND GODDESSES OF VIOLENCE. IF WE FAIL, WAKANDA AND THE QUEEN LOSE FACE.

BESIDES... WHO'D WANT TO MISS A CHANCE TO KILL AMERICANS AND GET PAID FOR IT?
NOW, THEN. IT IS TIME TO INGEST THE SACRED HERB. PLEASE SPEAK THE HYMN IN YOUR HEADS.
THIS GIFT, ONCE ONLY TAKEN THE PANTHER KINGS OF OUR SECRET HEAVEN, WAKANDA...
THIS MIRACLE, THAT WIDENS OUR EYES, MAKES STONE OF OUR FISTS AND BUILDS STORMS IN OUR MUSCLES...
TAKE THOSE SHADES OFF, XANDRA.

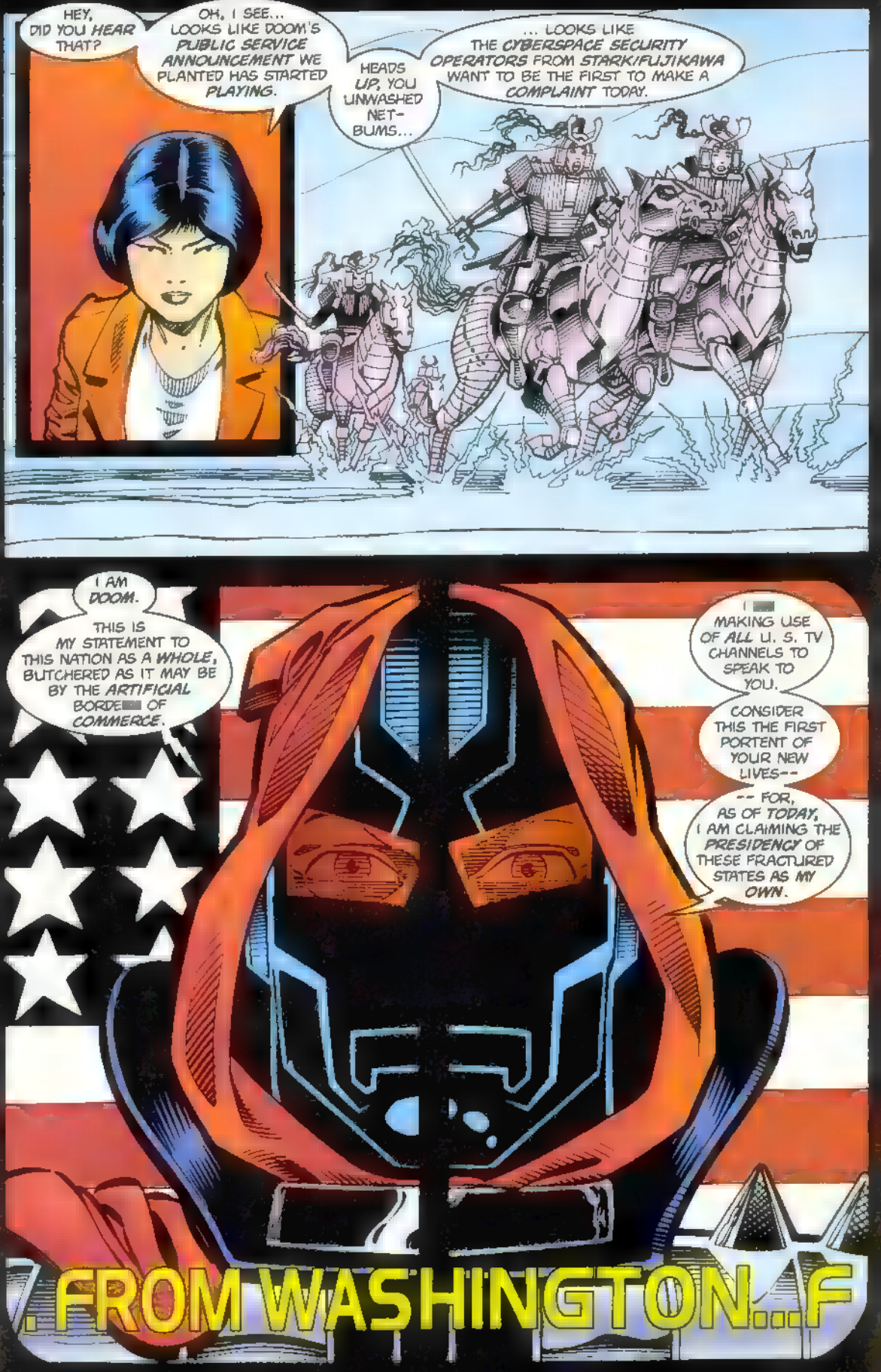

IN FLIGHT; THE CONFERENCE [redacted] WITHIN HOLY SPOOK, C-IN-C AIRCRAFT FOR THE GUILD OF MERCENARY ELITE.
I HOPE YOU BOYS HAVE DONE YOUR RESEARCH. THIS ONE'S GONNA BE TOUGH ENOUGH AS IT IS.
WE'VE WORKED WITH DOOM BEFORE. RESEARCH IS ALWAYS ADVISED WHEN DOOM'S INVOLVED.
DON'T YOU THINK USING RADIOACTIVE BULLETS IS A BIT MUCH, SHARP BLUE?


NOT FOR [redacted] LIZARDS, CHILL.
THE [redacted] CAPTAINS, THE WHITE HOUSE'S HONOR GUARD.
CRUDE BUT EXTENSIVE [redacted] WE'RE TALKING PROOPED SKINS, WIRED REFLEXES, BACK-UP NERVOUS SYSTEMS AND VITAL ORGAN SHUNTS...
THE PANTHERS'LL [redacted] THE [redacted] OFF THINGS, BUT THE [redacted] IS [redacted] TO US.
AS SQUAD LEADERS, I'M EXPECTING YOU THREE TO KEEP THIS SMOOTH AND MATHEMATICAL.
ONE MORE DRINK BEFORE THE WAR.

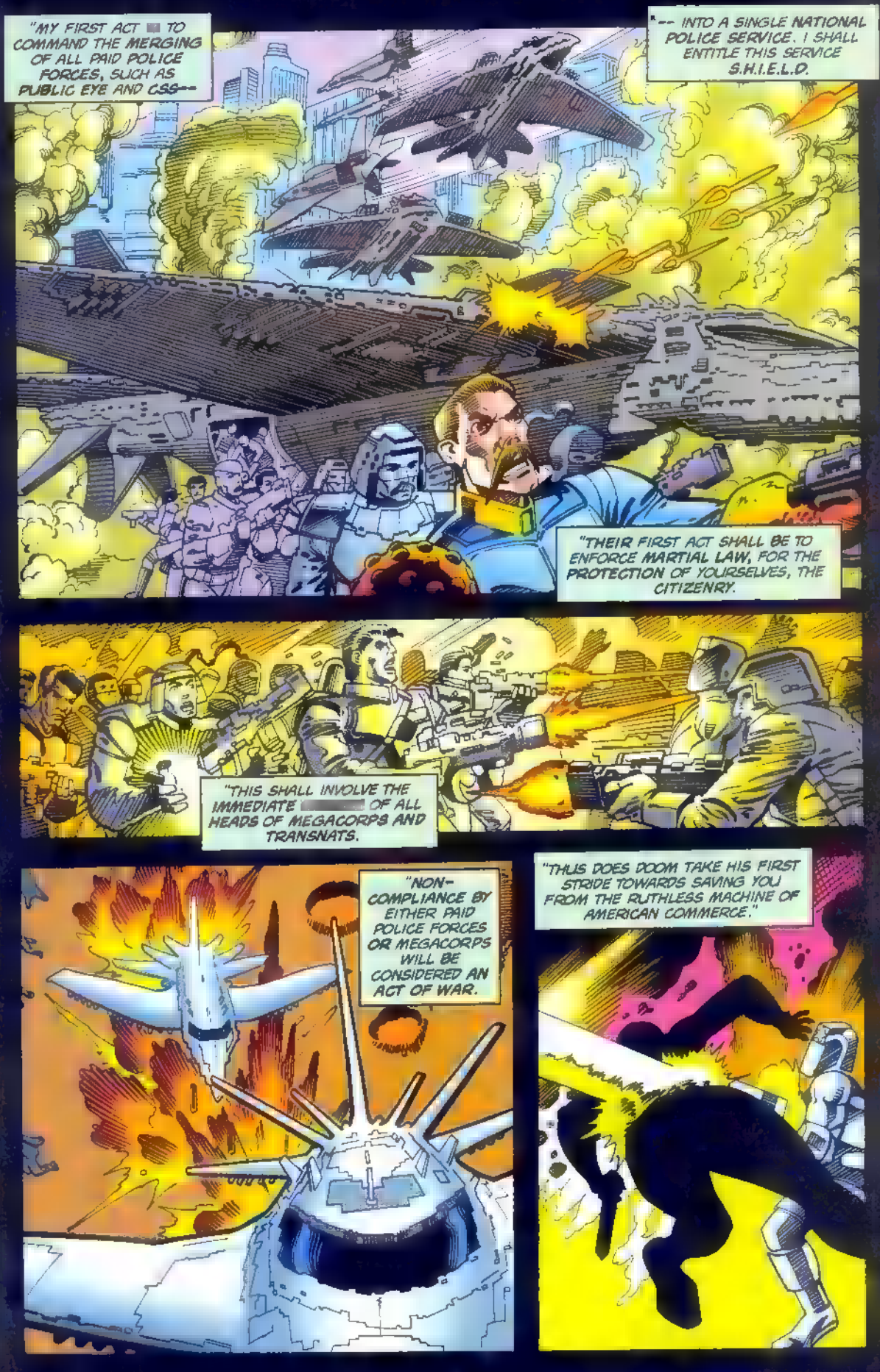
WASHINGTON D. C.; TO ONE SIDE, THE LIGHT EATING BLACK BOX OF THE SENATE; TO THE OTHER, THE BLINDING WHITE OF THE ANGEL'S BREATH CORP CENTRAL OFFICES...
ANGEL'S BREATH. THE MEGACORP THAT KILLED MAKHE-LASTAN.
THIS IS DOOM, ADDRESSING ALL POINTS;
IT BEGINS.


WE OUGHT TO BE PLAYING RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES.

"DOOM HAS NO NEED OF A SENATE FILLED WITH MEGACORP FLUNKIES."
"KILL IT."
WITHIN:
BOMB TERRORISTS BOMB
AAAA
PHONES ARE OUT
GET INTO CYBERSPACE -- ROUTE TO MAIN OFFICE AND GET HELP!
IN CYBERSPACE:
D'YOU THINK THEY'RE TRYING TO GET OUT YET? SCRABBLING AND BLEEDING AND SCREAMING AND WONDERING WHY LOCAL C-SPACE IS LOCKED UP?
TOLD YOU THIS'D BE FUN.


HEY, DID YOU HEAR THAT?
OH, I SEE... LOOKS LIKE DOOM'S PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT WE PLANTED HAS STARTED PLAYING.
HEADS UP, YOU UNWASHED NET-BUMS...
... LOOKS LIKE THE CYBERSPACE SECURITY OPERATORS FROM STARK/FUJIKAWA WANT TO BE THE FIRST TO MAKE A COMPLAINT TODAY.
I AM DOOM.
THIS IS MY STATEMENT TO THIS NATION AS A WHOLE, BUTCHERED AS IT MAY BE BY THE ARTIFICIAL BORDE[redacted] OF COMMERCE.
I [redacted] MAKING USE OF ALL U. S. TV CHANNELS TO SPEAK TO YOU.
CONSIDER THIS THE FIRST PORTENT OF YOUR NEW LIVES--
-- FOR, AS OF TODAY, I AM CLAIMING THE PRESIDENCY OF THESE FRACTURED STATES AS MY OWN.
FROM WASHINGTON...F

"YOUR CURRENT PRESIDENT DOES NOT CONSIDER YOU HIS PROTECTORATE. HE DOESN'T CONSIDER YOU AT ALL.
"YOUR PRESIDENT, OWNED AS HE IS BY COMMERCE, OFFERS NO SOLUTION TO THE HORROR OF YOUR EXISTENCE.
"YOUR LIVES ARE INDENTURED TO CORPORATIONS, OR ELSE TREATED AS DISEASES TO BE STAMPED OUT.
"HE IS MERELY THE MOST OBVIOUS PUSTULE IN THE INFECTION OF AMERICA.
"I AM HERE TO CURE YOU.
I INVEST MYSELF AS PRESIDENT BY RIGHT OF REVOLUTION. ALL PRESIDENTIAL POWERS GIFTED BY THE CONSTITUTION ARE HEREBY REACTIVATED.
"THE SENATE, EMPOWERED TO VETO THIS, ARE IN AGREEMENT, AS PROVEN BY THEIR SILENCE.

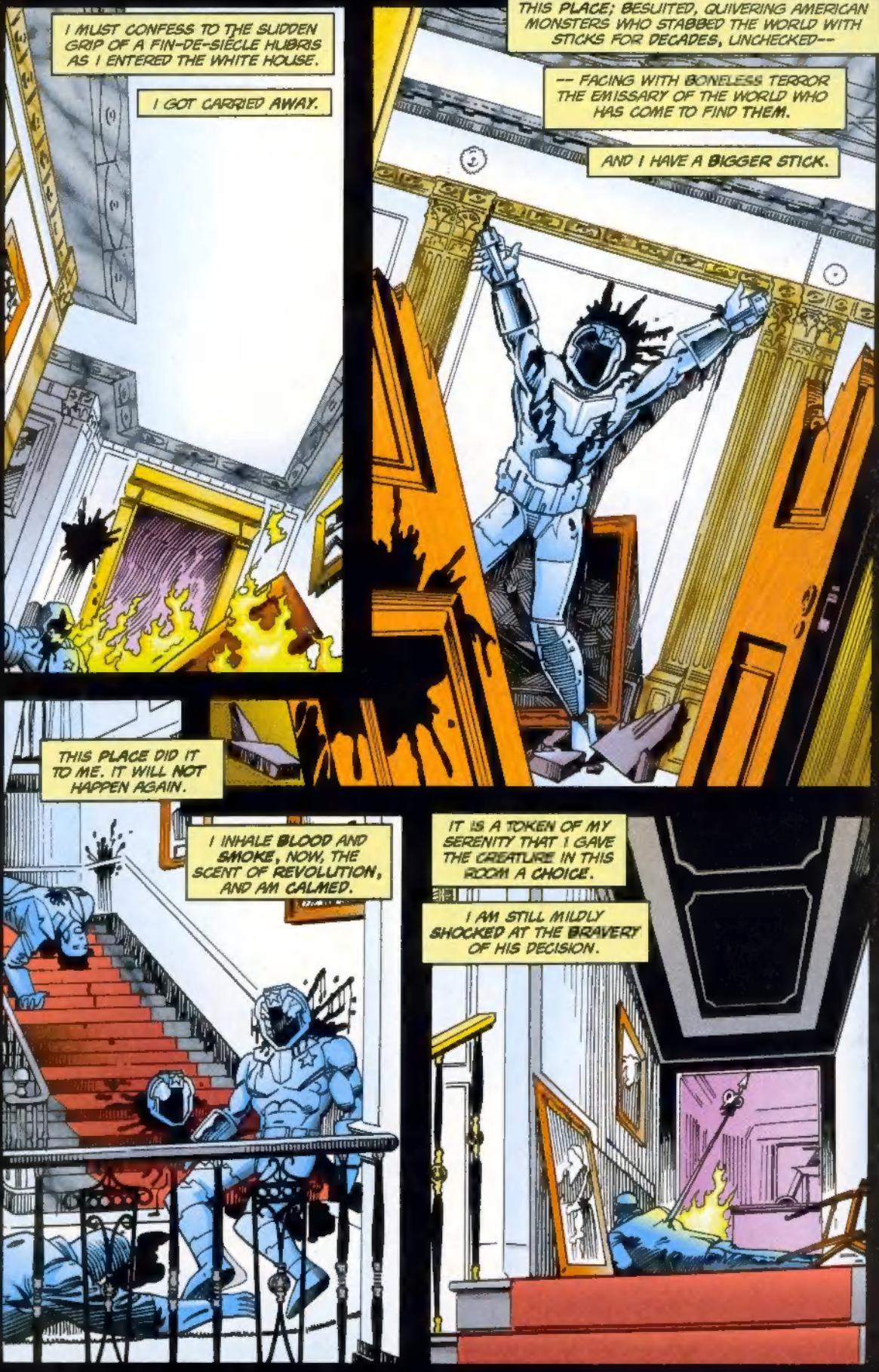

"MY FIRST ACT [redacted] TO COMMAND THE MERGING OF ALL PAID POLICE FORCES, SUCH AS PUBLIC EYE AND CSS--
-- INTO A SINGLE NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE. I SHALL ENTITLE THIS SERVICE S.H.I.E.L.D.
"THEIR FIRST ACT SHALL BE TO ENFORCE MARTIAL LAW, FOR THE PROTECTION OF YOURSELVES, THE CITIZENRY.
"THIS SHALL INVOLVE THE IMMEDIATE [redacted] OF ALL HEADS OF MEGACORPS AND TRANSNATS.
"NON-COMPLIANCE BY EITHER PAID POLICE FORCES OR MEGACORPS WILL BE CONSIDERED AN ACT OF WAR.
"THUS DOES DOOM TAKE HIS FIRST STRIDE TOWARDS SAVING YOU FROM THE RUTHLESS MACHINE OF AMERICAN COMMERCE."

WIRE.
EVERYTHING'S HOLDING IN C-SPACE. WE'RE UNDER ATTACK, BUT INDIGO [redacted] WE CAN HANDLE IT.
BLUE'S LOOKING FOR YOU, DOOM. SAYS SHE'S GOT THE OPPOSITION IN CHECK.
IS THAT GOOD?

MERCENARY REPORTS HAVE [redacted] MONEYLENDER'S EXACTITUDE. IT MEANS WHAT IT SAYS.
INFORM THE [redacted] DECK STAFF TO PREP A DROP [redacted]ICLE.

CYBERDIVE CHAMBER:

MY EMPLOYER. I SHOULD COMPLIMENT YOU ON YOUR SHOCK TACTICS. THE AMERICANS NEVER REALLY FOUND THEIR FEET.
NKRUMAH.
CONSIDER THE STRIKE AREA SECURE.
THE HOUSE ITSELF IS ANOTHER MATTER. WE HAVE NO INTELLIGENCE ON ANY INTERIOR GUARD...
LEND YOUR PANTHERS' STRENGTH TO THE GUILD.
THE WHITE HOUSE IS MINE.


I MUST CONFESS TO THE SUDDEN GRIP OF A FIN-DE-SIÈCLE HUBRIS AS I ENTERED THE WHITE HOUSE.
I GOT CARRIED AWAY.
THIS PLACE; BESUITED, QUIVERING AMERICAN MONSTERS WHO STABBED THE WORLD WITH STICKS FOR DECADES, UNCHECKED--
-- FACING WITH BONELESS TERROR THE EMISSARY OF THE WORLD WHO HAS COME TO FIND THEM.
AND I HAVE A BIGGER STICK.
THIS PLACE DID IT TO ME. IT WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.
I INHALE BLOOD AND SMOKE, NOW, THE SCENT OF REVOLUTION, AND AM CALMED.
IT IS A TOKEN OF MY SERENITY THAT I GAVE THE CREATURE IN THIS ROOM A CHOICE.
I AM STILL MILDLY SHOCKED AT THE BRAVERY OF HIS DECISION.

STILL. THAT REACTION WAS AS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE SHOCK HE EXPERIENCED.
THE SHOCK OF THE NEW.
THAT SHOCK SHALL TRAVEL AMERICA ROUND BEFORE I AM DONE.
I INHALE BLOOD AND SMOKE, A REVOLUTIONARY AT THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN...

"Every country has the government it deserves."
—Joseph de Maistre